



Hellertown Historical Society

Dedicated to Preserving the History and Heritage of Hellertown and its People

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Upcoming Events

Community Day – Aug 19 10AM-3PM

HHS Speaker Series – Coming Soon!

Walnut Street Bridge Ceremony – Oct 14

Hellertown Halloween Parade – Oct 22

Trick-Or-Treat at Old Jail – Oct 31

Borough Light-Up Night – Nov 24

HHS Holiday Open House – Dec 1

Santa Visit/Shopping @ Mill – Dec 10

Walnut Street “Pony” Bridge Reaches Historical Recognition



Shortly after the last issue of our newsletter was published, Hellertown Historical Society received confirmation that the Walnut Street “Pony” Bridge was unanimously approved for inclusion to the National Registry of Historic Places (NRHP). The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission Historic Preservation Board of Directors sent notification to HHS volunteer Chip Wagner, who performed all the necessary investigation and submission of the application. The bridge was officially included on May 8, 2023.

HHS generously thanks Chip for his hard work and tireless sacrifices to ensure this project reaches a positive conclusion. We should note that Chip Wagner is a direct descendant of the Christopher Wagner family who owned and operated the grist mill in the later 1700's. We are very proud of this great honor Chip has provided the Historical Society.

Plans are underway for a celebration to recognize this milestone. Expect to see details revealed soon for the October 14th event.

The End of Trolley Service

The photo in the left column shows the last trolley car after departing Hellertown. Trolley service began December 9, 1897. It continued through October 25, 1952 when the last car left Main and Walnut Streets before the final journey to the Bethlehem Steel Scrapyard. This photo, taken at Third and New Streets in Bethlehem, was snapped when the Hellertown trolley and the Allentown trolley, traveling via Bethlehem's South Side, met before their final demise. Dignitaries from both Hellertown and Bethlehem gathered for the occasion.

Feedback is essential for any publication to improve and grow. We welcome readers to provide their opinions, suggestions and comments about the content featured in our newsletter. Please send your feedback to the Editor at the email address shown at left.

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Hellertown Historical Society

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Submit Articles or Stories

Hellertown Historical Society Newsletter seeks any stories or news articles pertaining to Hellertown’s History and its people. Anyone is encouraged to submit articles, stories or news to the newsletter Managing Editor for consideration in upcoming editions. Submissions may be edited for content and/or space requirements. Please use the contact information on this page to submit your entry.



President’s Message:

Dear Hellertown Enthusiasts:

The Hellertown Historical Society is “Dedicated to preserving the history and *heritage* of Hellertown and its people”. What exactly does that mean? “Heritage” is defined as “*Something* that is passed down from preceding generations”.

That begs the next question: What is this “something” that is being passed down in Hellertown that we are

dedicated to preserving?

You will find lots of examples in this newsletter of our history: our Walnut Street pony bridge that will be celebrated on October 14th, our churches, our businesses, our residents and their jobs, notable buildings, and more. Collectively all of these things make up the history of our community. Our “*Community*” is our *heritage*! The word community is at the heart of the Historical Society, and why we bring you this newsletter.

“Community” is defined as “A group of people having common interests”. You and I share those common interests, both then and now. Remembering our past, and honoring those who came before us, is not only appropriate, it’s important! Our community of Hellertown still thrives today because we continue to share common interests with our neighbors and friends. We are the torchbearers that have been handed the flame of pride in, and commitment to, our Hellertown community. Whether you were born here or joined us yesterday, you are a member of a community that shares common interests – our Past, our Present, and our Future!

Hellertown has set aside Saturday, August 19th, 10am-3pm for *Community Days* – a time to come together to celebrate our common interests, and importantly, to support our local businesses. Whether or not you can join the festivities at Dimmick Park that day, please keep our local businesses in mind all year long when you are dining out, shopping, or looking for a service business. They are an important part of a thriving community! Our Community!

Warm Regards,
Larry Sutton, President

HHS Artifact Corner

This column will offer artifacts from our extensive collection and provide information about them...

The first photo at right is an item in our collection. It is a wall-mounted fire extinguisher bracket, but not like those found today. This one held a glass globe filled with a liquid such as seen in the other photo.

In the late 1800’s, these globes were filled with salt water and mounted where a person could grab it and toss it at the base of a fire. Later



versions, in the early 1900’s, were filled with carbon tetrachloride or CTC. These were mounted higher on



walls and had a wax seal that would melt to release the solution and a deflection device caused the liquid to disperse like a sprinkler.

Hellertown’s Historic Buildings - #8

A series featuring distinctive and historic buildings in Hellertown – Answer to this building location will appear in the next issue
Look at the building on left side and see if you recognize the same building at its current site and condition...



Hellertown’s Distinct and Historic Buildings - #7 Answer

A series featuring distinctive and historic homes in Hellertown
This was the home/business of George Soloman, 1238 Main Street, now a pet supply business.



Word Scramble - Fun Day at the Park

LIKSBHUL
WOWLIL
YREND0
DAPSALSEI
IEDS ASE IGTSH E
CUSANO

Answers in Next Issue

HHS Speaker Series to Resume

Plans are underway to resume the Hellertown Historical Society’s popular Speaker Series Meets. Each meeting, held in our Tavern Room on the lower level of the Heller-Wagner Grist Mill, features a guest speaker offering a presentation and discussion about a particular subject pertaining to Hellertown’s rich history and heritage. More information will be forthcoming soon. Be sure to mark your calendars for these when dates are released. You won’t want to miss them!

T.M.Ruch's Store

Thanks to a reader of the last issue of the newsletter, a correction is being made to the article about Titus Ruch's Store. The location of the Ruch Store was 610 Main Street in Hellertown.

The photo at right accompanied the original article. However, the woman on the right was identified as one of Ruch's daughters, Lottie Ruch Trumbower. It was in fact his other daughter, Ada Irene Ruch.

Additionally, Ada Ruch married Howard Strohl in 1917. Ten months later, Strohl was KIA in World War 1. In 1920, Ada married William Potts who later opened an insurance agency in the same building as Ruch's Store.



HELLERTOWN, Northampton County.

On the North Penn Branch of the P. & R. R. R., 51 miles from Philadelphia and 4 miles from Bethlehem, is a borough of over 600 inhabitants. Its chief industries are the manufacture of iron, brick, carriages, &c.

Ackerman J. B., miller	Laubach John A., bookseller
Bachman A. A., genl store	Laudenberger J. R., hotel
Ball Elwood, druggist	Leith Jacob B., general store
Beahm Charles, tailor	Lower Saucon Creamery Co., butter, &c.
Beahm F. M., shoemaker	Mall E. & D., hardware
Benner L. & E. J., flour mill	Manch Chas. A., J. P.
Berger Francis, hotel	More James B., J. P.
Boyer Francis R., genl store	Nelson W. H., saloon
Breisch W. H., baker	Nickum John A., cigar mfr
Bright C. H., genl store	Oberholtzer J. E., hotel
Brown Alfred, physician	Prosser D. D., cigars
Butz P. L., dentist	Reichard Henry, hardware
Detweiler W. F., physician	Reihman F. L., cabinetmaker
Dolan Patrick, saloon	RIEGEL JOSEPH, P. M.
Fehr Francis L., stoves, &c.	Rohn J. D., painter
Funk J. L., shoemaker	Rorththrock M., blacksmith
Giering E. J., jeweler	Saucon Iron Co., iron manufrs
Greim Jacob L., flour mill	Saucon Savings Bank
Hagey Jonas, jeweler	Schaffer Owen, shoemaker
Hartzog J. F., agt P. R. R. R.	Seifert Isaac, furniture
Heller H. D., physician	Stever Henry, saw mill
Hess E. T. Col., Hellertown Hotel	Wagner J. & J., flour mill
Hess Jer. S. & Bro., lumber and brick manufrs, &c.	Walp I. B., boots and shoes
Hulfelder J. C., restaurant	Weisel G. L., marble works
Kline H. H., carriage manufr	Weisel W. H., harnessmaker
Landis D. J., oysters, &c.	Weitknecht Daniel, foundry
	Ziegenfuss E. P., carriages

From the Boyd's Business Directory of 1883, p. 174, these were the chief industries in Hellertown, many listed with their owners. Note the primary access is the Pennsylvania and Reading Railroad. Also note the population at that time.

Charlie's Place - Triumph to Tragedy

Unless you have been a long-time resident of Hellertown, few people today remember Charlie's Place.

Although it's been a very long time since it occurred, the story still seems to find a moment to be mentioned, usually from "old-timers" often when there has been a severe fire in the area.

This copy of an article from "The Herald" dated November 14, 1962 was found in the HHS archives...see the photo at right.

Charlie's Place was a tavern located on the SE corner of Main and Depot Streets, at 837 Main Street, directly across from what was then Prosser's Drug Store, now Advanced Optics.

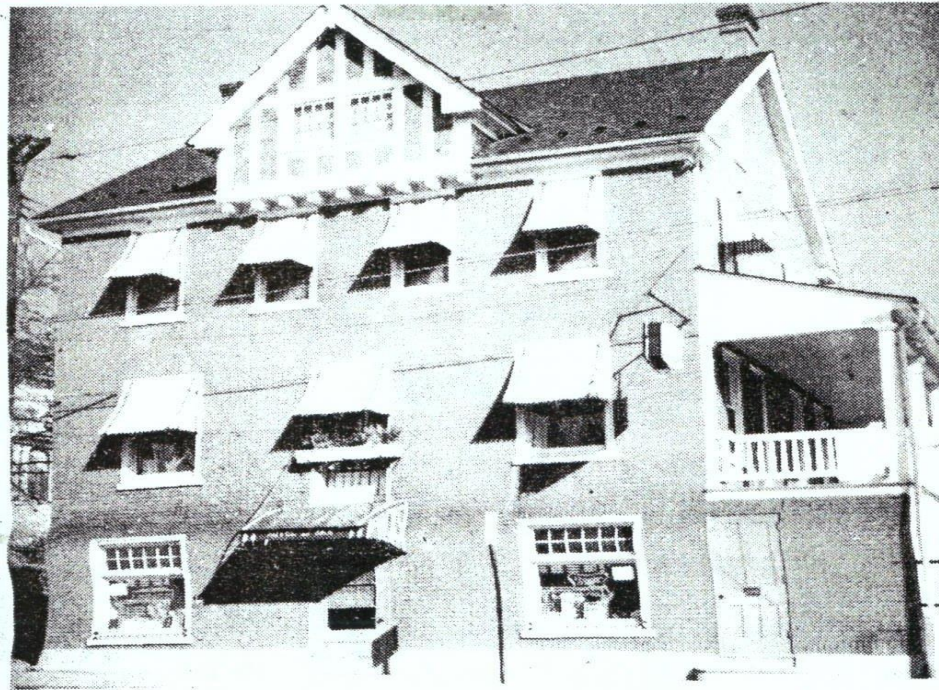
As the article states, Charles Koch took new ownership of the then Pock's Hotel and filed documentation to change the name.

While we are unable to comment on the success or failure of the business, it was well-established and continuing until tragedy struck.

A swift-moving fire engulfed the building on early Christmas morning, 1969. Dewey firefighters did all they could to contain the blaze, but the fire had already moved too fast through much of the building. In the aftermath, it was discovered two patrons, both males, perished.

The building was later demolished and several businesses have since opened on the site. Currently a cigarette/tobacco shop resides there. However, the memory of what once happened here, still haunts many Hellertown citizens. The same ones who still recall the disaster whenever another severe fire occurs in town. It's one of Hellertown's few nightmarish memories.

The HERALD, November 14, 1962



Charlie's Place

New Owner Gives Hotel New Name

Charles J. Koch, new owner of Pock's Hotel, 837 Main Street, Hellertown, has filed a legal application to have the name of the hotel changed to "Charlie's Place."

Koch, who lives at 21 E. Ettwein Street, Bethlehem, filed the application Monday with the Office of the Prothonotary of the Court of Common Pleas of Northampton County, Easton.

Besides the hotel, Koch intends to retain Pock's general restaurant.

Secretaries Back in the Day

By Dolores Stauffer DiPaolo

Today, they are referred to as “Administrative Assistants”. Before this, they were called Secretaries. They handle all the clerical tasks, and sometimes non-clerical tasks, for a Manager or an entire Department. They are indispensable in the work force; so much so they have their own day of recognition which is well-deserved. This quiz provides an insight to the historic tools and procedures once used years before technology introduced computers...

1. **A. How were letters sealed before envelopes with glue on the flaps? B. What was used to enhance the sealed letter?**

2. **How was a letter composed before the use of a typewriter?**

3. **What machine, using a wax cylinder, was used to dictate a letter for playback?**

4. **What was in use before the invention of the ball-point pen?**

5. **What machine was used to add addresses for mass mailing?**

(HINT – It was noisy, clanking loudly. This machine created a metal plate with a name and address. This plate was then taken to another machine where it had an ink roller run over the plate creating the address on the envelope. About 25 of these plates could be loaded on the machine simultaneously.)

6. **For making multiple copies, the typewriter was set to by-pass the ribbon and it...**

A. Cut the letters in the paper making a _____.

B. It was then put on a _____ machine.

For a large number of items, it had to be re-inked several times.

7. **If only a few copies were needed, a special paper was used. This paper, when typed upon, allowed each character to appear on the reverse side of the sheet as a waxy character. This was then attached to a smaller, hand-cranked machine called a _____.**

8. **What was used to remove a typing mistake on paper?**

9. **What color was the copy?**

10. **When multiple copies were typed, the top copy went to the addressee, the bottom copy was to be filed. What was used between each paper to make this additional copy?**

11. **What was used to correct such a paper created in #10?**

12. **What machine was used to dictate copy that the Secretary could listen through an earphone during play back in order to create a paper per the Manager’s dictation?**

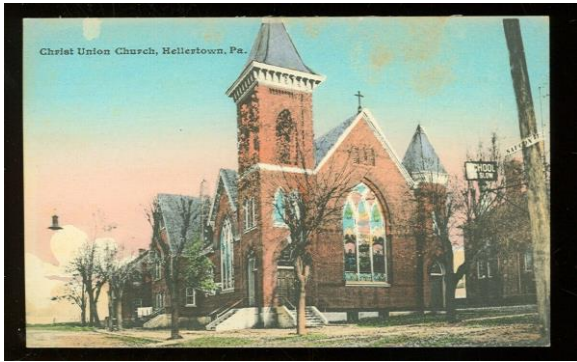
Answers Below Right



Calvin Fluck’s Green Grocery and Confectionary store at 612 Main Street circa early 1900’s before Main Street was paved in 1923-1925. Note the trees growing through the roof overhang. Today the Hellertown Bakery and True Shepherd Health Care L.L.C. both occupy this site.

12. A more modern dictaphone
- top copy, then the file copy
11. A typing eraser – erasing the
10. Carbon paper
9. Purple
- sharp tool
8. A razor blade or similar such
7. Ditto
- machine
6. A. Stencil B. Mimeograph
5. Addressograph machine
4. Fountain pen
3. Dictaphone
2. Hand-written
- into the wax.
- family crest or small die imprint,
- 1A. Melted wax B. A cygnet ring,

**Answers to
“Secretaries Back in
the Day”**



Post Card Photo of Christ Lutheran Church at Northampton and Saucon Streets as it once appeared



Christ Lutheran Church on Northampton Street after the tragic fire caused by a lightning strike



Christ Lutheran Church at 69 Main Street as it appears today (Courtesy CLC Facebook Page)

Christ Lutheran Church

By Dolores Stauffer DiPaolo

This is the first in a series of articles focusing on Hellertown churches and their histories...

Christ Lutheran Church was founded in April of 1870. The Lutheran and Dutch reformed congregations decided to build a union church on land donated by John F. Rentzheimer at the corner of Northampton and Saucon Streets. During a two-day ceremony on July 30 and 31, 1870, the cornerstone was laid. It was dedicated the following Spring on May 28 and 29, 1871. Worship was in German, but services in English were offered. Times for each service were printed in the Bethlehem newspaper.

Although new and probably beautiful, this church was not without its troubles. On July 17, 1890, a cyclone came through Hellertown, hit the church steeple and dropped it beside the church. A new bell was purchased and a steeple was built. Six years after that on April 17, lightning struck the church and it burned to the ground. Although this was a tragedy, it proved to the community that an organized fire service was needed. This led to the founding of the Dewey Fire Company.

The congregation would continue to meet in the Odd Fellows Hall when on May 3, 1896, the decision was made to build a new church. The new church was built of brick and donated timber from local woods. It was dedicated on May 2, 1897. A new bell for the tower was donated by Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Rentzheimer; it first tolled for the funeral of Mrs. Rentzheimer later that month.

In the late 1890's, a women's auxiliary was formed. They were responsible for the care of the church and organizing fundraisers to help run the church. In 1930-1940, the women would meet each week to roast and package peanuts which they sold to the community. Since this was during the depression, it was done to raise money to feed the hungry. In 1939, the Hellertown Church Singers was formed and Mrs. Addie Frey was Director of the group.

Despite the renovations done with the help of the ladies' auxiliary fundraisers and the growth of the community, the congregation grew so much that a new, larger church became a necessity. On January 20, 1963, a building fund campaign began to raise funds for a new church and school. November 23, 1969, the entire congregation met at the church on Northampton Street and wished it a fond farewell. The following week, November 30, the new church at 69 Main Street was dedicated.

The new church was constructed with materials gathered from all over the world. Marble for the alter and font came from quarries in the Holy Land, the corner stone from Canada, pews from North Carolina, metal ware and paraments from Germany and bricks from Ohio.

Christ Lutheran Church members have supported Habitat for Humanity, raising thousands in funding and providing the labor to build a new kitchen for New Bethany Ministries Mollard Hospitality Center. Pastor Philip Spohn, serving the church for 27 years, has provided guidance and leadership during challenging times.

In conclusion, no matter who you are, you are always invited to and welcome at Christ Lutheran Church, Hellertown.

Classroom Renovations

By Dolores Stauffer DiPaolo

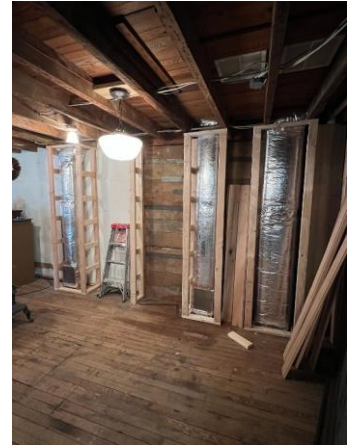
Do you know we have a museum? Were you ever in our museum? Whether you answer yes or no, come along with me and I'll tell you about it.

On our tour we describe the process of using water power through the mill machinery for making grain into flour. We also have individual rooms that replicate life in historic Hellertown. The first is a bedroom, then a kitchen, and a living room. Then we move into the next part of the museum to see a General Store, a pharmacy and a dry goods store which is a replica of one in the early 1900's in Hellertown. Finally, we get to the school room which is what I really want to highlight.

There was HVAC duct work exposed which detracted from the authenticity of the class room. In order to rectify the issue, it was recently renovated by a local carpenter, Mike Di Paolo of Di Paolo Woodworks. The desks were moved out, the teacher and the students all left the room, then Mike got to work. He framed-out the wall and covered it with ship lapping. He left space between two of the sections and installed shelving.

When Mike was done with his part of the project, our strong male volunteers hung the clock that came from one of our local one room school houses. They also hung the *real Slate* blackboard (which was very heavy) and brought back the desks. Jeanette and Harry, faithful volunteers, who oversee the museum, got the kids back into their seats, brought in the teacher's desk and, of course, the teacher. The school is now ready to resume classes.

Next time you're in the area, stop in and take a tour of our museum. It's free. It's filled with interesting artifacts from long, long ago. If you're young they will amaze you, but if you're a Senior Citizen they will bring back nice, fun memories. Our Office hours are Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday 9:30 to 11:30. Or call the Society at 610-838-1770 to arrange an appointment.



During Renovation



Finished Renovation